

## Chapter One

### MANUAL USAGE

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*Criteria for Designation of Scenic Highways*  
*A Guide for Public Outreach, Executive Summary*



# Chapter One

## **MANUAL USAGE**

### **1-1.0 OVERVIEW**

#### **1-1.01 Objective**

The *Connecticut Highway Design Manual* has been prepared to provide guidance on the geometric design of bridge and highway projects. If used conscientiously and diligently, the *Manual* should be a significant benefit to designers in selecting cost-effective designs that will meet the objectives of the local community and those of the Department. Each project should be designed as part of the total environment, specifically designed to fit into the context of the area where it will be constructed. The design produced, especially those within rural areas, should reflect the natural, scenic and cultural landscape of the area. Where practical, designers should take advantage of the physical and topographical characteristics of an area to maximize aesthetics. For a highway project to ultimately be successful, public involvement must be established early in the design process so that a common goal may be achieved. Included as an Appendix to Chapter One is the executive summary from the Department's *A Guide for Public Outreach*, which has been prepared by the Office of Communications.

Throughout the design process, a designer may need to use the flexibility provided by this *Manual* to produce a design solution that satisfies diverse and occasionally conflicting interests. To aid in building an understanding of sensitivity and flexibility in design, the Federal Highway Administration has produced a guide, *Flexibility in Highway Design*. Designers should refer to this guide for examples of projects that have successfully integrated aesthetic, historic and scenic values along with safety and mobility. Also, the Department has produced a number of corridor studies for State-designated "Scenic Roads," which are referenced at the end of Chapter Two. These studies include recommendations that will allow for roadway improvements while protecting the scenic character of these roadways. Designers should be familiar with these studies and should consider applying some of the design tools included in these studies to other projects within sensitive areas.

#### **1-1.02 Scope**

The *Connecticut Highway Design Manual* provides design criteria for the following highway elements:

1. geometrics;
2. roadside safety;
3. temporary traffic control; and
4. special design elements:

- a. accessibility for disabled individuals,
- b. bikeways,
- c. landscaping,
- d. commuter lots, and
- e. fencing.

The designer should be aware of the projects' surrounding environment and carefully integrate the design within its context. Through site visits, the designer may develop an appreciation of the physical characteristics of an area and an understanding of community values. The designer must be aware of the impacts that result from rigidly applying the criteria contained within this *Manual*. The designer should carefully evaluate each criterion so that the final design provides for safety and operational improvement but in harmony with the aesthetic, historic and cultural resources of the community. The *Manual* provides flexibility to a designer through the use of a range of design values where appropriate. Where the application of the minimum design criteria results in unreasonably high construction costs or extreme impacts to the surrounding environment, the design exception process can address the use of lower than minimum design values on a case-by-case basis. See [Section 6-6.0](#).

The proper design of a highway project requires input from various disciplines. Early coordination is required so that their input may be effectively incorporated into the final design of a project. Their input may impact the original scope or change the character of the project. The design of a highway project will likely include the evaluation and design of the following elements:

1. pavement design and rehabilitation;
2. hydraulic design of drainage appurtenances;
3. traffic engineering elements (e.g., traffic signals, lighting, signs, pavement markings);
4. geotechnical elements (e.g., slope stability, soil bearing strength);
5. structural design elements (e.g., bridges, culverts, retaining walls);
6. environmental considerations including:
  - a. noise,
  - b. water quality,
  - c. biological resources, and
  - d. historical resources;
7. right-of-way impacts (e.g., property owners, utilities, railroads); and
8. highway capacity.

### **1-1.03      Basis for Design**

The *Connecticut Highway Design Manual* has been structured to select the applicable set of design criteria based on the following factors:

1. urban/rural location;
2. design classification, based primarily on the extent of roadside development;
3. the functional class of the facility:
  - a. freeway,
  - b. arterial,
  - c. collector, or
  - d. local; and
4. the project scope of work:
  - a. new construction,
  - b. 4R freeways,
  - c. major reconstruction (non-freeways),
  - d. 3R (non-freeways),
  - e. spot improvements, or
  - f. pavement resurfacing and reclamation.



## **1-2.0     **MANUAL SUMMARY****

### **1-2.01     Introduction**

The following summarizes the content of each chapter within the *Connecticut Highway Design Manual*.

### **1-2.02     Chapter Two “Geometric Design of Existing Highways (3R Non-Freeway Projects)”**

ConnDOT often programs highway improvements on existing non-freeways for reasons other than geometric or safety deficiencies (e.g., pavement deterioration). These projects typically must be designed within restrictive right-of-way, financial and environmental constraints. Therefore, the design criteria for new construction are often not attainable without major and, frequently, unacceptable adverse impacts. At the same time, however, the Department must take the opportunity to make cost-effective, practical improvements to the geometric design of existing highways and streets.

For these reasons, the Department has adopted in Chapter Two revised limits for geometric design criteria for projects on existing non-freeways which are, in many cases, lower than the values for new construction. These criteria are based on a sound, engineering assessment of the underlying principles behind geometric design and on how the criteria for new construction can be legitimately modified to apply to existing highways without sacrificing highway safety.

Chapter Two presents the Department’s criteria for 3R non-freeway projects. These criteria are intended to find the balance among many competing and conflicting objectives. These include the objective of improving Connecticut’s existing highways; the objective of minimizing the adverse impacts of highway construction; and the objective of improving the greatest number of miles within the available funds.

### **1-2.03     Chapter Three “Geometric Design of Existing Highways (4R Freeway Projects) (Spot Improvements) (Pavement Resurfacing and Reclamation Projects)”**

Based on the same approach to 3R non-freeway projects in Chapter Two, Chapter Three presents modified geometric design criteria for:

1.     4R freeway projects,
2.     spot improvement projects, and
3.     pavement resurfacing and reclamation projects.

The design criteria for these three project scopes of work reflect the practical constraints of designing highway improvements on existing facilities.

#### **1-2.04      Chapter Four “Rural Highways and Roads (New Construction/Major Reconstruction)”**

Chapter Four presents a set of summary tables of geometric design criteria for new construction/major reconstruction projects in rural areas based on:

1. functional classification;
2. design classification on non-freeways (based on the average number of access points per mile per side); and
3. for arterials, two-lane versus multi-lane.

These tables provide the *Manual* user with a convenient summary of the geometric design criteria that apply to a specific facility. The tables also identify the controlling design criteria that require a written design exception if not met.

#### **1-2.05      Chapter Five “Urban Highways and Streets (New Construction/Major Reconstruction)”**

Chapter Five presents a set of summary tables of geometric design criteria for new construction/major reconstruction projects in urban areas based on:

1. functional classification;
2. design classification on non-freeways (based on the type of area); and
3. for arterials, two-lane versus multi-lane.

These tables provide the *Manual* user with a convenient summary of the geometric design criteria that apply to a specific facility. The tables also identify the controlling design criteria that require a written design exception if not met.

#### **1-2.06      Chapter Six “Design Controls”**

Proper highway design must reflect the consideration of many basic design controls that provide the overall framework for highway design. Chapter Six discusses the Department’s application of these controls, including:

1. highway systems (e.g., functional classification, Federal-aid);
2. the various speed measurements (e.g., design speed);
3. highway capacity analyses;
4. access control; and
5. project scope of work.

Chapter Six also discusses the Department’s process for requesting a design exception for those geometric design values that do not meet the Department’s criteria.



**1-2.07      Chapter Seven “Sight Distance”**

Sufficient sight distance is critical to safe highway operations. Chapter Seven presents ConnDOT criteria for various sight distance elements, including stopping sight distance and decision sight distance. The Chapter also discusses the application of the two sight distance parameters. Intersection sight distance is addressed in Chapter Eleven “Intersections At-Grade.”

**1-2.08      Chapter Eight “Horizontal Alignment”**

Highway horizontal alignment has a significant impact on highway safety and construction costs. Chapter Eight presents ConnDOT criteria that will establish the alignment of a highway facility. This includes:

1. types of horizontal curves;
2. minimum radii;
3. superelevation development (e.g., transition lengths, axis of rotation); and
4. sight distance around horizontal curves.

Because of their different operating conditions, Chapter Eight presents separate criteria for all rural highways/high-speed urban highways ( $V > 45$  mph) and for low-speed urban streets ( $V \leq 45$  mph).

**1-2.09      Chapter Nine “Vertical Alignment”**

Highway vertical alignment, perhaps more so than any other highway element, has a significant impact on construction costs and highway operations, especially where there is an appreciable volume of trucks. Chapter Nine presents ConnDOT criteria on vertical alignment, including:

1. maximum and minimum grades,
2. critical lengths of grade,
3. warrants and design for climbing lanes,
4. the design of crest and sag vertical curves, and
5. vertical clearances.

**1-2.10      Chapter Ten “Cross Sections”**

The highway cross section has a significant impact on the driver's perception of the serviceability and safety of the highway facility. Chapter Ten presents ConnDOT criteria on cross section elements to supplement the design values in Chapters Two, Four and Five. Chapter Ten discusses:

1. the roadway section (e.g., travel lanes, shoulders, cross slopes, parking lanes, curbs);
2. roadside elements (e.g., sidewalks, fill slopes, cut sections);

3. medians;
4. cross sections for bridges and underpasses; and
5. right-of-way.

#### **1-2.11      Chapter Eleven “Intersections At-Grade”**

Intersections at-grade represent major points of conflict between crossing flows of traffic. Driver delay is inevitable because of the need to assign right-of-way, and crashes often cluster about intersections. Therefore, they merit considerable attention in highway design. Chapter Eleven presents ConnDOT criteria for the design of intersections at-grade, including:

1. general design controls (e.g., capacity, selection of design vehicle, alignment, profile);
2. intersection sight distance;
3. design for right turns;
4. turning roadways;
5. auxiliary turning lanes (e.g., warrants, length, dual turn lanes);
6. median openings;
7. channelization; and
8. driveways.

#### **1-2.12      Chapter Twelve “Interchanges”**

Interchanges offer the safest and most effective method to accommodate traffic operations between two intersecting highways. However, their high cost and significant impacts limit their application to freeways and other selected major facilities. Chapter Twelve presents ConnDOT criteria for the selection and design of interchanges, including:

1. warrants;
2. types;
3. traffic operations (e.g., lane balance, lane reduction, capacity);
4. freeway/ramp junctions (e.g., exit and entrance ramps);
5. geometric design of ramps; and
6. design of the ramp/crossing road intersection.

#### **1-2.13      Chapter Thirteen “Roadside Safety”**

Regardless of the highway engineering design, a certain number of vehicles will run off the road. The roadside design should provide these drivers with a reasonable opportunity to recover and safely return to the highway. This is accomplished through the availability of a clear roadside and/or the installation, where warranted, of protective barriers. Chapter Thirteen presents ConnDOT criteria for roadside safety, including:

1. clear zone criteria;
2. guiderail warrants;
3. guiderail types and selection;
4. median barriers (e.g., warrants, types, design);
5. guiderail layout and design (e.g., length of need, flare rates, placement behind curbs); and
6. impact attenuators/end treatments.

#### **1-2.14      Chapter Fourteen “Temporary Traffic Control”**

A significant portion of the Department's future highway program will be to upgrade existing facilities. Because this will inevitably disrupt existing traffic operations, Chapter Fourteen presents ConnDOT criteria on temporary traffic control to minimize operational and safety problems. The Chapter discusses:

1. the ConnDOT responsibilities for temporary traffic control,
2. temporary traffic control management,
3. geometric design through the construction zone, and
4. roadside safety through the construction zone.

#### **1-2.15      Chapter Fifteen “Special Design Elements”**

In addition to the traditional highway design elements, the Department is responsible for ensuring that the highway design properly incorporates a wide variety of special design elements. Chapter Fifteen presents ConnDOT criteria for these elements, including:

1. accessibility for disabled individuals,
2. layout and design of commuter lots,
3. location and design of bus stops,
4. warrants and design of bikeways,
5. landscaping,
6. warrants and location for fencing, and
7. design implications for noise barriers.



**Appendix**

This Appendix to Chapter One presents the following:

1. *Criteria for Designation of Scenic Highways.*
2. *A Guide for Public Outreach, Executive Summary.*



# **CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATION OF SCENIC HIGHWAYS**

A potential state scenic highway must abut significant natural or cultural features such as agricultural land or historic buildings and structures which are listed on the National or State Register of Historic Places, or afford vistas of marshes, shoreline, forests with mature trees, or other notable natural or geologic feature which singularly or in combination set the highway apart from other state highways as being distinct. The Highway shall have a minimum length of one (1) mile and shall abut development which is compatible with its surroundings. Such development must not detract from the scenic or natural character or visual qualities of the highway area.

## **Guidelines for Requesting Designation**

1. Requests for state scenic highway designation from any agency, municipality, group or individual should be directed to:

***Commissioner  
Department of Transportation  
2800 Berlin Turnpike  
P.O. Box 317546  
Newington, CT 06131-7546***

2. The applicant must prepare a report for submission to the Commissioner which shall include the following:
  - a. A statement of the highway segments or areas to be included.
  - b. A description of natural and cultural resources and features of scenic interest.
  - c. A description of existing land use.
  - d. Photographs of outstanding and representative scenery.
  - e. A list of properties on the National or State Register of Historic Places. The applicant may contact the Connecticut Historical Commission [(860) 566-3005] for assistance in identifying properties which have been historically designated along a proposed scenic highway.
3. The Scenic Roads Advisory Committee shall make a systematic evaluation of the extent and quality of historic, scenic, natural and cultural resources for the proposed scenic highway.
4. The Scenic Roads Advisory Committee may review any reports, letter, articles, or other documents which is deemed necessary to assist in its recommendation. It may also request additional information from the applicant to clarify any information provided in the report. Its recommendation shall be forwarded to the Commissioner for action.

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**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

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**Designation of Scenic Roads**

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Section 1: Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies are amended by adding new sections 13b-31c-1 to 13b-31c-5 inclusive, as follows:

**Sec. 13b-31c-1. Definitions**

(a) "Advisory Committee" means the Scenic Road Advisory Committee established pursuant to these regulations.

(b) "Commissioner" means the Commissioner of the Department of Transportation (DOT).

(c) "Department" means the Department of Transportation (DOT).

(d) "Improvement" means actions or activities initiated by the Department of Transportation which alter or improve a designated scenic road in one or more of the following ways: (1) widening of the right-of-way or traveled portion of the highway, (2) installation or replacement of guide railing, (3) paving, (4) changes of grade, and (5) straightening and removal of stone walls or mature trees.

(e) "Scenic Road" means any state highway or portion thereof that (1) passes through agricultural land or abuts land on which is located an historic building or structure listed on the National Register of Historic Places or the state register of historic places, compiled pursuant to section 10-321 of the general statutes, or (2) affords vistas of marshes, shoreline, forests with mature trees or notable geologic or other natural features.

(f) "State Highway" means a highway, bridge or appurtenance to a highway or bridge designated as part of the state highway system within the provisions of chapter 237 of the Connecticut General Statutes, or a highway, bridge or appurtenance to a highway or bridge specifically included in the state highway system by statute.

**Sec. 13b-31c-2. Administration, advisory committee, composition and duties**

(a) The Commissioner shall establish a Scenic Road Advisory Committee. This Committee will include representation from the Departments of Transportation, Environmental Protection and Economic Development.

(b) The Advisory Committee shall meet quarterly, unless there is no business, or as necessary to:

(1) Develop a method to systematically evaluate request for scenic road designation.

(2) Review and evaluate the requests submitted to the Commissioner to designate a State highway, or portion thereof, as a scenic road.

(3) Prepare recommendations to the Commissioner as to those highways, or portion thereof, appropriate for designation as a scenic road.



(4) Review Department proposals to evaluate whether the proposed improvement will have an effect upon or alter the characteristics that qualified the highway as scenic.

(5) Recommend alternate courses of action which could avoid, mitigate or minimize adverse effects of the improvement on the scenic road, without compromising the safety of the traveling public.

(6) When conditions of development, zone change or other local action occur they may review the designated scenic road and recommend to the Commissioner any changes in designation.

### **Section 13b-31c-3. Request to designate a highway as scenic**

(a) Requests to designate a state highway as a scenic road may be made to the Commissioner by any agency, municipality, group or individual.

(1) Requests for consideration must include a report providing pertinent information on the proposed designated highway. This report shall be prepared by the requesting agency, municipality, group or individual and submitted to the Commissioner. The report shall include the following:

(A) Highway segments or areas to be included.

(B) Description of natural and cultural resources and features of scenic interest.

(C) Existing land use.

(D) Photographs of outstanding and representative scenery.

(E) Properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places and/or state register of historic places.

(b) The Advisory Committee shall make a systematic evaluation of the extent and quality of historic or scenic, natural and cultural resources for the proposed designated scenic road.

(c) The Advisory Committee may review any reports, letters, articles, etc. or any other document which it deems necessary to assist in its recommendation. It may also request additional information from the applicant to clarify any information provided in the report.

(d) Within 90 days of its meeting, the Advisory Committee shall, based on the review of the submitted information report and systematic evaluation of the resources, forward recommendations to the Commissioner for approval or denial of designation. This recommendation will include the identification of the specific features or characteristics which would qualify it as scenic or the reasons why a scenic designation is not considered appropriate.

(e) Within 45 days after reviewing the Advisory Committee's recommendation, the Commissioner will approve or deny the request for scenic road designation.

(f) Within 15 days of the Commissioner's determination, the requesting agency, municipality, group or individual shall be informed in writing of the decision and the basis for it.

### **Sec. 13b-31c-4. Reconsideration of requests to designate a highway**

(a) State highways which do not receive a recommendation for designation or are recommended for deletion will receive no further consideration until additional information is presented to the Commissioner. This additional data is limited to the specific item or items which resulted in the denial or deletion of scenic designation. Within 60 days of its meeting to reconsider, the Advisory Committee shall forward its recommendation to the Commissioner for a final decision.

(b) Within 45 days after receiving the Advisory Committee's recommendation, the Commissioner shall render a final decision on the requested designation.

(c) Within 15 days of the Commissioner's final determination, the requesting agency, municipality, group or individual shall be informed in writing of the final decision and the basis for it.

**Sec. 13b-31c-5. Qualifications for a scenic road**

(a) In order to qualify for scenic road designation, the state highway under consideration must have significant natural or cultural features along its borders such as agricultural land, an historic building or structure which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places or the state register of historic places or affords vistas of marches, shoreline, forests with mature trees or notable geologic or other natural features which singly or in combination set this highway apart from other highways as being distinct.

(b) The proposed scenic road shall have a minimum length of 1 mile.

(c) The proposed scenic road shall have development which is compatible with its surroundings and must not detract from the scenic, natural character and visual quality of the highway area.

Section 2: The Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies are amended by adding new sections 13b-31e-1 to 13b-31e-4 inclusive, as follows:

**Section 13b-31e-1. Determination of effect upon designated scenic roads**

(a) **Determination of effect:** Improvements proposed to scenic roads shall be reviewed by the Advisory Committee to evaluate whether the improvements will have a significant effect upon or alter the specific features or characteristics that qualified it to be designated as scenic.

(1) No adverse effect: If the Advisory Committee finds that the proposed improvement will not significantly affect these features or characteristics, the undertaking may proceed as proposed.

(2) Adverse effect: If the Advisory Committee finds that the proposed improvement will have a significant adverse impact on the features or characteristics of the scenic road, it shall:

(A) Notify the Commissioner of their finding.

(B) Return the project to the designer with recommended alternate courses of action that could avoid, mitigate or minimize adverse effects of undertaking on the scenic road. These recommendations could include, but are not limited to, consideration of a waiver of Department or Federal standards, the use of tinted pavements, stone wall replacements and tree or shrub replacements.

(C) If alternatives or waivers are not considered to be feasible by the designer, the Advisory Committee shall make recommendations to the Commissioner as to whether the project should be constructed as proposed.

(D) In all cases, the Commissioner shall make the final determination as to whether to approve or deny the proposed improvements or alternations.

**Sec. 13b-31e-2. Public notification of proposed improvements or alterations to a designated scenic road**

(a) For those highway construction or maintenance activities that a majority of the Advisory Committee determines to constitute an "improvement" to a designated scenic road within the meaning of Section 1(d) of this regulation, the Department shall publish, in a newspaper of general circulation in the area of the proposed improvements, a notice

describing the alteration or improvement. There shall be a thirty (30) day comment period following this notice during which interested persons may submit written comments.

(b) The Advisory Committee shall review and evaluate all written comments. A report of findings will be prepared outlining the resolution of the various comments and forward to the Commissioner.

(c) In all cases, the Commissioner shall make the final determination as to whether to approve or deny the proposed improvements or alterations.

### **Sec. 13b-31e-3. Special improvement and maintenance standards for scenic roads**

(a) At the time a highway is officially designated as scenic, the characteristics responsible for this designation shall be clearly identified and recorded. Any alteration to a scenic road shall maintain these characteristics, if practical.

(b) Improvements to scenic roads shall be developed in conformity with current Department design and/or maintenance standards for the type road unless it is determined that using such standards will have a significant adverse impact upon the roadway's scenic characteristics. In which case, exemption from Department or Federal standards may be considered to preserve the roadway's scenic qualities.

(c) In designing improvements to and/or preparing for maintenance on a designated scenic road, special consideration should be given to the following:

(1) **Widening of the Right of Way:** The Department may not purchase additional property along a designated scenic road unless the Commissioner has first determined that property acquisition is necessary. The area purchased should be kept to a minimum with the need and use outlined in a detailed report to the Commissioner.

(2) **Widening of the Traveled Portion:** Wherever possible and as safety allows, roadway widening should be kept to a minimum width and accomplished within the existing highway right-of-way. The Department may not widen or issue a permit to allow others to widen any portion of a designated scenic road unless the Commissioner has first determined, after review and approval of a traffic engineering report, that such an improvement is necessary to improve an existing or potential traffic problem.

(3) **Guide Rails (Guardrails):** Guide rails should be replaced in-kind in accordance with current Department standards unless the Commissioner determines after review and approval of a traffic engineering report, that a safety problem exists and another type of guard rail system is necessary for more positive protection.

(4) **Paving:** Paving is to be accomplished in accordance with current Department standards. The pavement type, drainage appurtenances and curbing installation will be accomplished as required with consideration given to the characteristics of the scenic road. The width of paving should not extend more than 12 inches beyond the existing shoulder.

(5) **Changes of Grade:** Wherever possible, proposed changes in grade should be designed to a minimum to restrict the impact on the scenic features. Changes of grade must be approved by the Commissioner after review and approval of a traffic engineering report where it has been determined that such an improvement is necessary to improve an existing or potential traffic problem.

(6) **Straightening or Removal of Stone Walls:** The Commissioner may approve the straightening or removal of a stone wall after review and approval of a traffic engineering report that has determined that such action is necessary to improve an existing or potential safety hazard, improve a sight line restriction, for installation of drainage appurtenances or for other sound reason. The Department will attempt, if practical, to relocate the stone wall within the highway right-of-way or on private property of the abutting property owner. The stone wall should be reconstructed in a manner consistent with its former appearance.

(7) **Removal of Mature Trees:** Wherever possible and as safety allows, mature trees within the highway right-of-way should not be removed. If roadway widening is approved, the alignment should be such as to restrict its impact on mature trees. The Commissioner may approve the removal of mature trees after review of an engineering report which outlines the need.

(8) **General Maintenance:** All scenic roads shall receive the level of maintenance necessary for safe public travel.

(9) **Road Bed Maintenance:** Necessary improvements, as determined by the Director of Maintenance, may be made to improve safety, drainage or reduce a maintenance problem, but shall not disturb the scenic characteristics for which the roadway was designated.

(10) **Cross Drainage Maintenance:** Cross drainage shall be maintained where necessary to prevent damage to the highway, possible washouts and other problems which may be detrimental to the safety of the traveling public.

(11) **Vegetation Maintenance:** Where necessary for the safety and protection of the traveling public, tree branches and shrubs may be trimmed. Mowing shall be performed as necessary in accordance with Department standards for health and safety requirements.

(12) **Sign Maintenance:** All information, regulatory, warning and identification signs shall be erected and maintained as necessary or provided for by the State Traffic Commission.

(13) **Winter Maintenance:** Winter maintenance procedures shall be conducted in accordance with standard Department policy. Snow and ice control shall be performed in accordance with the latest Department policy.

#### **Sec. 13b-31e-4. Emergency repairs**

Should the Commissioner declare an emergency, as specified under Section 13b-26(f) of the General Statutes, repairs will be made in a manner which will minimize, as much as reasonably possible, the effect upon the features for which the highway was designated as scenic.

**Statement of purpose:** To provide regulations for the designation of State highways as scenic roads in accordance with Public Act No. 87-280.

Be it known that the foregoing regulations are adopted by the aforesaid agency pursuant to Public Act No. 87-280 of the Public Acts, after publication in the Connecticut Law Journal on March 8, 1988, of the notice of the proposal to adopt such regulations.

Wherefore, the foregoing regulations are hereby adopted, effective when filed with the Secretary of the State.

In Witness Whereof: March 28, 1989, J. William Burns, Commissioner.

Approved by the Attorney General as to legal sufficiency in accordance with Sec. 4-169, as amended, General Statutes: March 31, 1989.

Approved by the Legislative Regulation Review Committee in accordance with Sec. 4-170, as amended, of the General Statutes: April 18, 1989.

Two certified copies received and filed, and one such copy forwarded to the Commission on Official Legal Publications in accordance with Sec. 4-172, as amended, of the General Statutes, Secretary of State: May 1, 1989.

# SCENIC ROADS

As of March 10, 2003

ROUTE	TOWN	DATE DESIGNATED	MILES	LOCATION
4	Sharon	July 26 1990	3.10	From Route 7 west, to Dunbar Road.
4	Sharon	October 22 1992	0.80	From Dunbar Road, west to Old Sharon Road.
4	Harwinton	July 29 1996	1.60	From Cooks Dam, west to Route 118.
118			0.10	From Route 4, west to Cemetery Road.
7	Sharon	July 26 1990	4.29	From the Cornwall Bridge crossing of the Housatonic River, north to Route 128, at the covered bridge.
7	Kent	October 17 1991	10.50	From the New Milford Town line, north to the Cornwall Town line.
7	Cornwall	January 3 2002	3.56	From the Kent Town line, north to Route 4.
7	Sharon, Salisbury Canaan	January 3 2002	10.26	From Route 128, north to the North Canaan Town line.
10	Farmington	April 13 1999	1.0	From Route 4, south to Tunxis Street.
14	Windham Scotland	January 13 1999	4.40	From the Windham Center School to 0.3 mi. East of Scotland Center
14A	Sterling	February 2 1995	0.70	From Route 49, east to Porter Pond Road.
15***	Greenwich to Stratford	January 28 1993	37.50	The Merritt Parkway from the New York State Line to the Housatonic River Bridge.
17	Durham	June 26 2001	1.40	From Route 77, north to 125 feet north of Talcott Lane.
33	Wilton	November 3 1997	4.90	From the Wilton/Ridgefield Town line, south to the intersection with Old Ridgewood Road #1.
41	Sharon	July 26 1990	4.00	From Boland Road, north to Cole Road.
***	NATIONALLY	DESIGNATED	SCENIC	ROAD

<b>ROUTE</b>	<b>TOWN</b>	<b>DATE DESIGNATED</b>	<b>MILES</b>	<b>LOCATION</b>
41	Sharon	October 22 1992	2.20	From Cole Road, north to the Sharon/Salisbury Town line.
41	Sharon	October 22 1992	2.20	From Boland Road, south to the New York State line.
41	Salisbury	December 20 1993	8.01	From the Sharon/Salisbury Town line, north to the Massachusetts State line.
44	Salisbury	December 20 1993	8.83	From the New York State line, east to the Salisbury/North Canaan Town line.
45* SR 478*	Washington Warren	December 26 1996	6.90	From the Washington/Kent Town line on SR 478, east to Route 45, north on Route 45 to the northern junction of SR 478, and west on SR 478 to the Warren/Kent Town line.
SR 478*	Kent	December 6 2000	1.0	From the Washington/Kent Town line, north to the Warren/Kent Town line.
49	North Stonington	February 2 1995	10.90	From Route 184, north to 0.10 miles before Route 165.
49	Voluntown	February 2 1995	7.90	From the Boat Launch area, north to Route 14A.
53	Redding	December 18 1992	2.03	From the Redding/Weston Town line, north to the southern junction of Route 107.
58	Easton	May 6 1994	3.14	From the Fairfield/Easton Town line, north to Freeborn Road.
63	Litchfield	January 4 2002	3.37	From the Morris Town line, north to Sarcka Lane.
67	Roxbury	November 14 1990	0.87	From Ranny Hill Road, south to 0.30 miles south of Route 317.
67	Roxbury	August 23 1996	2.90	From the Roxbury/Bridgewater Town line, east to Ranny Hill Road.
75	Suffield	February 23 2001	4.30	From the southern end of the bridge over Stony Brook, north to the Massachusetts state line
<b>*NOTE:</b>	<b>Completes loop around Lake Waramaug</b>			

<b>ROUTE</b>	<b>TOWN</b>	<b>DATE DESIGNATED</b>	<b>MILES</b>	<b>LOCATION</b>
77	Guilford	May 3 1991	11.56	From Route 146, north to the Durham/Guilford Town line.
77	Durham	June 26 2001	2.30	From the Durham/Guilford Town line, north to Route 17.
97	Pomfret	April 11 2001	4.50	From Route 44, north to Route 169.
118	Litchfield	January 4 2002	2.77	From Clark Road, west to Route 63.
146	Branford Guilford	May 29 1990	12.20	From Eades Street, Branford to US Route 1, Guilford.
154	Haddam	January 13 1994	9.16	From the Chester/Haddam Town line, north to the Haddam/Middletown Town line.
160	Glastonbury	January 18 1991	1.06	From the Roaring Brook Bridge, west to the Connecticut River.
164	Preston	February 1 1994	2.58	From Old Shetucket Turnpike, north to the Preston/Griswold Town line.
169***	Lisbon Woodstock	April 15 1991	32.10	From Rocky Hollow Road in Lisbon, north to the Massachusetts State Line.
179	Canton	February 25 1991	0.30	From the Burlington/Canton Town line to the junction with SR 565.
181	Barkhamsted	January 10 1995	1.10	From Route 44, north to Route 318.
183	Colebrook	May 20 1994	3.10	From Route 182, north to Church Hill Road.
202	New Hartford	August 12 1991	5.10	From the Canton/New Hartford Town line, west to the Bakersville Methodist Church.
202	Litchfield	January 4 2002	0.47	From Route 118, west to Russell Street.
203	Windham	January 13 1999	1.70	From Route 32 northerly to Route 14, Windham Center Green.
***	<b>NATIONALLY</b>	<b>DESIGNATED</b>	<b>SCENIC</b>	<b>ROAD</b>

<b>ROUTE</b>	<b>TOWN</b>	<b>DATE DESIGNATED</b>	<b>MILES</b>	<b>LOCATION</b>
219	Barkhamstead	January 10 1995	2.60	From Route 318, south to the end of Lake McDonnough Dam.
219	New Hartford	September 24 1998	0.70	From the Lake McDonnough Dam, southerly to the south side of the "Green Bridge" (Br. No. 1561).
234	Stonington	February 20 1990	3.16	From North Main Street, west to Route 27.
244	Pomfret	February 21 2003	3.10	From Route 97, westerly to Ragged Hill Road.
254	Litchfield	January 4 2002	3.98	From Camp Hill Road in Northfield, west to Route 118.
272	Norfolk	May 13 1996	11.00	From the Norfolk/Goshen Town line, north to the Massachusetts State line.
317	Roxbury	November 14 1990	0.40	From Painter Hill Road, west to Route 67.
318	Barkhamsted	January 10 1995	2.60	From Route 181 to Route 219.
565	Canton	February 25 1991	0.70	From Route 179, northeast to Allen Place.

TOTAL MILES 270.90



# **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

## ***A GUIDE FOR PUBLIC OUTREACH***

### ***ESTABLISHING A PUBLIC PARTNERSHIP IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF TRANSPORTATION PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS***

Distributed By

THE CONNECTICUT  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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Approved

J. William Burns  
Commissioner

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## **1.0 CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION -** **MISSION/PRINCIPLE/VALUE AND PUBLIC OUTREACH POLICY**

**MISSION:** It is the mission of the Connecticut Department of Transportation to provide a safe, efficient, and cost, effective transportation system that meets the mobility needs of its users.

**PRINCIPLE:** To engage stakeholders in a consultative process from the earliest stages of project development.

**VALUE:** Customer Service - Committed to understanding and satisfying the needs of our customers through a total quality effort.

It is the policy of the Connecticut Department of Transportation (DOT) to consult with stakeholders and customers of the transportation system. In accomplishing this , the DOT shall:

1. Identify those who may be affected or interested in transportation plans, programs or projects.
2. Comply with all Federal and State requirements in developing and implementing public outreach programs throughout transportation planning, project design, project construction, and system maintenance.
3. Develop and implement public outreach programs throughout transportation planning, project design, project construction, and system maintenance.
4. Periodically review public outreach efforts to modify and improve such efforts as necessary.

## **2.0 INTRODUCTION**

Public Outreach is the process implemented to inform and offer the opportunity to the public, to participate in the development of a proposed transportation action. "Partners" are participants with comparable status, with equal legitimacy. The emphasis is on developing transportation decisions as a product of partners' collaborative work. It is a result of debate and choices made jointly by a variety of government and non-government parties working through an on-going, interactive process.

This Executive Summary presents an overview of the key elements of the Connecticut Department of Transportation's (DOT) complete "Guide For Public Outreach" (Guide), for developing public outreach processes throughout the development of transportation actions (study, program or project). The Guide has been prepared for use by the DOT, and provides a menu for developing and implementing an effective process for informing the public and for community participation. The Guide identifies the coordination required between the DOT, federal and other state agencies, local governments, elected officials and Regional Planning Organizations (RPO), and the citizens of Connecticut throughout the development of proposed transportation actions, from concept to completion. The complete Guide is available for viewing at the Connecticut Department of Transportation Library, Room G-114, 2800 Berlin Turnpike, P.O. Box.317546, Newington, Connecticut 06131-7546.

The complete Guide is structured to provide a menu for public outreach plans throughout three general phases of program or project development: Planning, Facility Design/Rights-of-Way/Program Development, and Construction/Implementation/Maintenance. In addition to an explanation of terms used, and specific federal and state regulatory requirements, Appendices are also included in the complete Guide which address the following:

- Appendix A: Definitions And Explanations of Abbreviations
- Appendix B: Flow Diagrams and Summary Tables
- Appendix C: Public Outreach Strategies
- Appendix D: Mailing List "Interested and Affected Parties"
- Appendix E: Public Noticing Media Strategies and Public Notice Information
- Appendix F: Major Metropolitan Transportation Investments
- Appendix G: DOT Bureau of Public Transportation Public Outreach Activities
- Appendix H: DOT Bureau of Aviation and Ports Public Outreach Activities
- Appendix I: Connecticut Department of Transportation Policy Public Involvement/Public Hearings for Highway Layouts (Corridor) and Design (October, 1995)

- Appendix J: "Property Acquisition for Transportation Projects"  
(Connecticut Department of Transportation, 1991)  
"Relocation Assistance Program" (Connecticut  
Department of Transportation)
- Appendix K: Connecticut Department of Transportation Office of  
Construction Public Outreach/Involvement and  
Procedures
- Appendix L: Sample Public Outreach Effectiveness Review  
Survey Questionnaire
- Appendix M: "Innovations in Public Involvement  
For Transportation Planning" (FHWA/FTA),  
(January, 1994)
- Appendix N: "Public Outreach Handbook for Departments of  
Transportation" (NCHRP Report #364,)

The Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA) is the most recent legislation which emphasizes public participation in the transportation planning process. Under the terms of federal legislation (recent and historic), there is a general need for an effective proactive and meaningful public outreach process which is informative and provides opportunity for participation. It is the DOT's responsibility to provide government agencies, citizens, affected public agencies, private providers of transportation, and other parties (collectively identified as stakeholders) information and the opportunity to participate in the development of proposed transportation actions.

Public outreach programs are by necessity strongly individualistic, and tailored to local circumstances. Generalization of public outreach efforts is difficult and the development of standardized procedures is impossible. Multiple approaches may be required to elicit the involvement of different stakeholders. Emphasis is focused upon transportation actions which can directly affect neighborhoods and communities for the long term.

Any public outreach program should incorporate the following:

1. Outreach needs to be effective; i.e., adequate notice must be provided to the general public and targeted audiences.
2. Public input needs to take place early enough in the planning process that it can be assimilated.
3. Sufficient information needs to be provided to the public to allow their input to be informed.
4. The public's input should be responded to, explaining why it was either accepted or rejected.

The characteristics of successful participation are: inclusiveness, early involvement, and clear accurate information. Community involvement programs must be tailored to the community, the audience, and the issues. Tools identified in the Guide for effective public outreach include: public meetings, charrettes, visioning, brainstorming, citizen's advisory committees, transportation fairs, focus groups, collaborative task forces, workshops, public opinion surveys, interviews, polls and media strategies (e.g. newsletters, paid advertisements, television). Many of the suggested procedures and tools identified in this document have been applied at least in some form, by the DOT for specific programs and projects. This guide draws upon the DOT's applications with an effort to enhance and improve them.

The tools identified here, however, are not intended to be exhaustive. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) have jointly published information regarding public outreach entitled "Innovations in Public Involvement for Transportation Planning" (January, 1994). Explanations of many of the tools identified in the Guide are based upon this FHWA/FTA document.

### **3.0 PLANNING PROCESS**

#### **3.1 GENERAL:**

One of the areas most affected by ISTEA is public involvement in the transportation planning processes. These federal rules affect both state and local officials in that they mandate certain requirements for public input in transportation decision-making. The requirements as presented here pertain directly to the Statewide planning process. Distinct requirements have also been defined in ISTEA which pertain directly to the Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO). The MPO's each are required to establish and document their respective public outreach procedures.

The DOT's planning process is defined here as three elements: development of the State Long Range Transportation Plan, development of the State Transportation Improvement Program, and project planning. As part of these elements, the DOT must develop, adopt and implement formalized procedures for effective community participation in the development of the following State planning documents:

- Statewide Long Range Transportation Plan (Plan)
- Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)
- Statewide Transportation Improvement Program Amendments  
(for amendments which may have a significant affect upon air quality)
- Federal Environmental Impact Statement
- State Environmental Impact Evaluation
- Federal Environmental Assessment
- State Finding of No Significant Impact
- Environmental permit applications

Federal requirements apply to the development and major amendments of both the Plan and the STIP. The transportation planning process must include a proactive public involvement process. The rules spell out seven distinct criteria that must be included in a state's public participation process:

1. Early and continuing public involvement opportunities;
2. Timely information;
3. Reasonable public access to technical and policy information;
4. Adequate public notice of public involvement activities and time for public review and comment at key decision points;
5. A process for demonstrating explicit consideration and response to public input;
6. A process for seeking out and considering the needs of those traditionally underserved;

7. Periodic review of the effectiveness of the public involvement process.

These must be adhered to as the DOT structures a formalized public involvement process for the development of both the Plan and STIP. The development, documentation and adoption of DOT's public outreach policies and procedures must be conducted through a public comment period of 45 days. These public outreach policies and procedures must be periodically reviewed to assure full and open access to all. This Guide represents the DOT's documentation of such policies and procedures.

Public outreach for the development of the Plan, must include:

- Citizens, affected and other interested parties must be provided a reasonable opportunity to comment;
- The proposed Plan shall be published, with reasonable notification of its availability, or otherwise made readily available for public review and comment;
- The official statewide Plan shall be published, with reasonable notification of its availability, or otherwise made readily available for public information.

As part of informing the general public throughout the planning process, a mailing list of "Interested or Affected Parties" can be developed as a means of informing, and receiving information from those directly affected or interested in a proposed action. Participatory groups (such as a voluntary Advisory Committee or Focus Groups) may also be considered in the development of specific major actions. A summary of pertinent information can be made available for review by the general public (including "Interested or Affected Parties"). Public forums can be held to solicit input during the Draft Plan development, during Draft STIP development, and for major projects, at various decision points during project development. Public notifications should be made at the beginning of the draft stage of the Plan and STIP, and various decision points during project development.

### **3.2 STATE LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN (PLAN):**

The State must develop a statewide Long Range Transportation Plan for all areas of the state. The Plan is prepared by the DOT Office of Policy and reflects Transportation Plans prepared by each of Connecticut's fifteen Regional Planning Organizations. The Plan is a multi-modal transportation plan with a minimum 20 year planning horizon. The Plan must include both long-range and short-range strategies/actions that lead to the development of an integrated intermodal transportation system that facilitates the efficient movement of people and goods.



The update or preparation of a new Plan is initiated with the consolidation of previously identified projects, which remedy existing transportation deficiencies, and a review of broad policy issues. In conjunction with this, long range statewide transportation deficiencies are defined to identify the needs of the state's transportation system for the Plan projected horizon year.

The DOT will prepare and make the Draft Plan available to the general public for inspection for a reasonable period (thirty days) within which written comments can be submitted. The DOT will also schedule a public meeting during this period to discuss issues and collect additional comments.

The DOT will prepare the final Plan, using the information obtained from public input opportunities. The final Plan will be made available to the community. Notices of availability will be published.

### **3.3 STATE TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMS (STIP):**

The DOT Office of Policy coordinates the preparation of a STIP. A STIP must be developed for the entire state through a cooperative effort between the State, the RPO and transit districts. The STIP outlines which specific projects are being funded over the next three years, and the sources of funds for those projects. A project cannot be included in a STIP if there is no reasonable expectation for funding.

The DOT prepares a Draft STIP for review and comment by each of the fifteen RPOs. The Draft STIP is also made available by the DOT to the general public for comment.

The DOT and MPOs will determine the final list of projects for the STIP, incorporating the information received from previous input opportunities. All significant public comments received and the DOT's responses will be made part of the final endorsed STIP. DOT submits the endorsed STIP to the FHWA and FTA for approval. The endorsement and federal approval process also includes an air quality analysis which must demonstrate air quality benefits anticipated with the implementation of the projects identified in the STIP.

Once accepted by FHWA and FTA the general public (including the "Interested and Affected Parties") is notified of the DOT's adoption of a final STIP. The adopted STIP will be made available for public viewing.

### **3.4 STATE TRANSPORTATION PLAN AND STIP REVISIONS:**

Revisions to an endorsed Plan or STIP are often required, due to a number of reasons (e.g. adding or deleting major projects or major scope revisions of listed projects). ISTEA requires that major amendments to either must undergo the same public involvement procedures as that for Plan or STIP development.

Minor revisions (e.g. projects which are air quality neutral and fiscally constrained) can be accommodated with less rigorous public outreach procedures. A mechanism to obtain community input for such changes is through regularly scheduled RPO meetings.

Notification of major revisions will be made to the general public. The portion of the regularly scheduled RPO meeting which is to address STIP revisions should be used for the DOT to explain the suggested changes, and to collect comments regarding the changes. Public notification of the adopted Plan or STIP revisions will be made.

### **3.5 PROJECT PLANNING:**

Project Planning focuses upon the individual studies, programs, and projects identified in the STIP. Major projects (such as new or substantially modified transportation systems) are, in most cases, conceptual (and need further study) when initially identified in the STIP. For major transportation investments, project planning assesses potential alternatives in the selection of a preferred action, and develops documentation to define and address social and environmental concerns.

Interaction with the community during project planning should be a continuance of the public outreach efforts implemented during the development of the Plan or STIP. A public outreach plan should be initiated by the project sponsor/lead agency in consultation with the RPO, at the onset of the development of any proposed action, prior to conducting detailed analysis. The extent of the public outreach plan for each proposed action is dependent upon the anticipated extensiveness of the study corridor or proposed action, and the potential effects a proposed action may have upon the region and neighborhoods. The type of environmental documentation will also dictate the minimum requirements for public outreach in accordance with federal regulations.

Public outreach during project planning, is focused upon a specific proposed action(s). For relatively minor actions, informing the public of the anticipated activity can be accomplished through the municipality and media strategies. These

actions typically do not involve substantial modifications to an existing transportation program or system, and do not require consideration of alternatives. For proposed actions which may be more extensive, the public outreach effort should also be more comprehensive.

At a minimum, public outreach efforts should be focused on those directly affected by the transportation action being considered. Public forums can be used to enhance this effort. Generally, public outreach should occur at critical stages (decision points) during the development of a proposed action. In addition, public outreach should also take place with major changes in a proposed action.

The establishment of a voluntary Advisory Committee (optional) to assist in developing a specific major transportation action can aid in identifying issues of concern and areas of opportunity.

A public outreach action plan for major proposed actions can include establishing a mailing list of "Interested or Affected Parties". (This list can be based upon information from the RPO in the affected study or project area). Information should be made available to the general public (including "Interested or Affected Parties" and participatory groups, if established). They should be offered the opportunity to participate in decisions to be made and notified of the outcome during various phases of this process.

A public meeting(s) can be used at various decision points to present information and identify citizen concerns and interests regarding the action being considered.

Project planning for major transportation investments typically consists of a needs/deficiencies assessment, an evaluation of alternatives, environmental documentation, and the selection preferred action.

For transportation actions associated with public transit, the DOT's Bureau of Public Transportation coordinates with specific organizations established by legislation, as well as task forces and committees.

Broadly speaking, airport and port actions generally involve the public outreach process utilized for highway actions. Public meetings for environmental permits, property acquisition, etc. are similar to those used for highway actions. The specialized nature of airport and port actions, however, involves contacts with a number of groups having specialized interests related to airport and port facilities. These include tenants and user groups, as well as committees.

#### **4.0 FACILITY DESIGN/RIGHTS-OF-WAY/PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT**

Once a determination has been made of what specific transportation action(s) (facility or program) can be supported for implementation, a detailed design of that action is initiated in the design phase of project development. Program details, facility design and property acquisition requirements are determined. Public outreach for this phase of development should be a continuance of the public outreach efforts implemented during project planning.

Documentation prepared during design includes detailed facility plans and specifications, special studies, or program criteria and administrative procedures. Once an action has been initiated for design, notification should be made by the -sponsoring agency to the general public (including "Interested and Affected Parties" and participatory groups, if established in the planning phase), of the intent to initiate the recommended action.

The design of a transportation facility is typically undertaken in stages of completion (i.e., Preliminary Engineering, Semi-Final Design, and Final Design). At the Preliminary Engineering design completion stage, the opportunity for a public meeting(s) would be offered to the municipality(s) directly affected by the proposed action. This meeting could provide the opportunity for officials and the public to participate and comment on the specifics of the action early in the design process. This opportunity can be made available again, at each of the Semi-Final and Final design completion stage. Public outreach may also take place prior to major changes in a proposed action.

The DOT follows rigid procedures in acquiring properties and assisting in relocations. These procedures are outlined in "Property Acquisition for Transportation Projects" and Relocation Assistance Program". Both are available from the DOT, Office of Rights-of-Way.

Similar notifications and opportunities for public meetings can be made during design development of a transportation program.

## **5.0 CONSTRUCTION/IMPLEMENTATION/MAINTENANCE**

### ***Construction***

Public outreach during construction of transportation facilities is focused toward the specific needs and issues associated with the project area and those who use it during and following construction. Once a project has been awarded for construction, the general public (including "Interested and Affected Parties" and any participatory group, if previously established) should be notified by the sponsoring agency of the initiation of construction.

Once construction has begun (prior to the disturbance of the area), a public meeting may be held. This meeting would provide an early opportunity for officials and the public to inquire and comment on the construction activities. This opportunity could be made available again, during construction completion.

### ***Program Implementation***

Public outreach during implementation of a transportation program (new or major revision) is focused toward the specific needs and issues associated with those directly affected by the program. Once a program has been implemented, the general public (including "Interested and Affected Parties" and any participatory group, if previously established) should be notified by the sponsoring agency of the program implementation. This notification should include an outline of the program requirements, qualifications, and critical dates.

Communication may be conducted as needed, with specific neighborhoods, community groups and businesses, or individuals to address specific concerns.

### ***Maintenance***

The DOT Office of Maintenance conducts numerous activities throughout the state on a daily basis which can affect travelers, residences and businesses. These activities can range from pot hole repair to roadway resurfacing. Public outreach for these activities which will result in one day or more disturbance of traffic movement can be conducted using media strategies. For roadway resurfacing projects, a specific procedure has been established which includes:

1. A letter is sent to Town Officials from the District Maintenance Manager advising them of the termini and incidentals that will be completed as part of the resurfacing project.
2. Town Officials are contacted by DOT District representatives to assure they received the letter and discuss any questions.

3. The RPO's are notified by the DOT' Bureau of Policy and Planning.
4. A copy of the resurfacing list is also sent to:  
Bituminous Producers Association  
Connecticut Construction Industries Association  
Utility Companies
5. The DOT Office of Communications is also provided with a copy of the list, and a news release is published prior to the start of work.

## **6.0 PUBLIC MEETINGS**

Public meetings can be an effective means of giving stakeholders the opportunity to receive information regarding a program or project, and for the program or project sponsors to obtain information from the public regarding their concerns. Public meetings can be sponsored by a state and/or federal agency, a municipality, an RPO or by a group (e.g. Citizens' Advisory Committee, Focus Groups, or Collaborative Task Forces/"Blue Ribbon" Commission). Meetings provide the opportunity to present graphical displays which can be more explanatory than other media such as newsletters or newspaper advertisements. Two general types of public meetings can be used. They are the "Open" forum and the "Formal" forum.

The Open forum Meeting (also identified as an Information Meeting or Open House) is an informal atmosphere, with the opportunity to attend any time during specified time period(s). In the case of the Formal forum meeting, public participation is accomplished both through a structured presentation and in informally prior to and following a presentation. The Formal meeting has a structured start time for those who wish to hear/view the presentation of information by the program or project sponsor.

A notice of a public meeting should be published. A comment period (thirty days is suggested) should be established which allows submission of written comments from the date of the meeting notice to a reasonable period following the meeting(s). Information on the proposed action should be made available at public locations for inspection for a reasonable time (fourteen days is suggested) prior to the meeting. (Environmental documentation is made available for public viewing at least thirty calendar days prior to a public meeting). All written comments and responses should be documented. An official written transcript of a meeting (when required) is made available to the public.

A number of public fora in addition to formal and open forum public meetings and electronic town meeting, are available for use in any public outreach program. These include: Charrettes, Visioning, Citizens Advisory Committees, Transportation Fairs/Major Special Events, Focus Groups, and Collaborative Task Forces/"Blue Ribbon" Commissions. An explanation of these fora is included in the FHWA/FTA document "Innovations in Public Involvement for Transportation Planning" (January, 1994).

